



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Office of Congressional Affairs

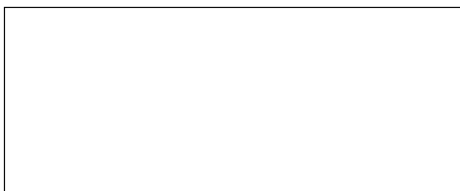
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7D24 HQS

Attached are copies of testimony from a recent Congressional hearing on improving the image of the public service. Some of it will be useful in ammunition in our fight to get flexible benefits and other programs started for our employees.

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DD/A Registry
89-1191X

STATEMENT OF
HONORABLE CONSTANCE BERRY NEWMAN
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

before the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE
COMMITTEE ON POST OFFICE AND CIVIL SERVICE
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

at the hearing on

THE IMAGE OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE

JUNE 28, 1989

MR. CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE:

THANK YOU FOR INVITING ME THIS MORNING TO TESTIFY ON THE
EXTREMELY IMPORTANT AND ELUSIVE TOPIC: THE IMAGE OF THE PUBLIC
SERVICE. AS YOU KNOW SO WELL, THIS NATION'S DEMOCRATIC FORM OF
GOVERNMENT WILL WORK ONLY SO LONG AS THE CITIZENS ARE SATISFIED
THAT GOVERNMENT THROUGH THE PUBLIC SERVANT MEETS THEIR NEEDS. IN
A 1774 PROCLAMATION, JOHN ADAMS MADE THE FOLLOWING POINT: "AS THE
HAPPINESS OF THE PEOPLE IS THE SOLE END OF GOVERNMENT, SO THE
CONSENT OF THE PEOPLE IS THE ONLY FOUNDATION OF IT." THE IMAGE
OF PUBLIC SERVICE IS IMPORTANT, THEN, BECAUSE THE CONSENT OF THE
GOVERNED COULD BE THREATENED BY THEIR DISSATISFACTION WITH THE
PERFORMANCE OF THE PUBLIC SERVANTS.

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I BELIEVE THAT THE TOPIC OF THIS HEARING IS ELUSIVE, HARD TO DEFINE, BECAUSE IMAGE AND FACT ARE INTERTWINED. THE IMAGE OF PUBLIC SERVANTS IN THE MIND OF EACH CITIZEN IS BASED ON THAT CITIZEN'S OWN EXPERIENCE AS WELL AS WHAT IS SAID BY OTHERS, SUCH AS THE PRESS, POLITICIANS, ACADEMICIANS AND OTHER OPINION-MAKERS. HOWEVER, IT IS DIFFICULT TO TELL WHAT IS THE GREATEST INFLUENCE ON THE INDIVIDUAL CITIZEN'S IMAGE OF PUBLIC SERVANTS. THE VOLCKER COMMISSION'S TASK FORCE ON PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE NOTES THE CONFUSION. THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN'S SURVEY RESEARCH CENTER SURVEY - ALBEIT IN 1975 - FOUND THAT 43% OF THE PEOPLE SURVEYED WHO HAD SOUGHT HELP FROM GOVERNMENT REPORTED THAT THEY WERE VERY SATISFIED. A 1987 GALLUP POLL FOUND THAT 63 PERCENT OF THOSE SURVEYED INDICATED THAT SOMETHING RUN BY THE GOVERNMENT IS USUALLY INEFFICIENT AND WASTEFUL AND 58 PERCENT SAID THAT DEALING WITH A FEDERAL AGENCY OFTEN IS NOT WORTH THE TROUBLE.

THE CITIZENS' IMAGE OF PUBLIC SERVICE, THEN, IS QUITE DIFFICULT TO EXPLAIN AND EVEN MORE DIFFICULT TO FIX. EACH AND EVERY PUBLIC SERVANT BEARS THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE IMAGE OF THE TOTAL PUBLIC SERVICE. EVERY ENCOUNTER A CITIZEN HAS WITH A PUBLIC SERVANT IS AN IMPORTANT ENCOUNTER FOR EACH.

THERE IS NO ARGUMENT BUT THAT THE FEDERAL SERVICE IS PRIMARILY MADE UP OF PEOPLE WHO ARE COMMITTED TO SERVING THE PUBLIC WITH DISTINCTION. HOWEVER, THERE HAVE BEEN AND CONTINUE TO BE SOME PUBLIC-PUBLIC SERVANT ENCOUNTERS THAT ARE UNSATISFACTORY AND EVEN UNPLEASANT. SOME MOST RECENT EXAMPLES WERE THE FOUR INTERNS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS WHO TESTIFIED BEFORE THE SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE ON FEDERAL SERVICES, POST OFFICE, AND CIVIL SERVICE OF THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS. NO MATTER WHAT THE REASON, THEIR EXPERIENCES IN SEARCHING FOR JOB INFORMATION DID NOT REPRESENT FOR THEM SATISFACTORY, PLEASANT ENCOUNTERS. THOSE FOUR INTERNS' IMAGE OF PUBLIC SERVICE PROBABLY WOULD NOT CHANGE EVEN IF THEY WERE TOLD OF THE NUMBER OF NOBEL PEACE PRIZE WINNERS IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, OR OF THE NUMBER OF LIVES SAVED BY THE SCIENTISTS AT THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH, OR OF THE DEDICATED PEOPLE WHO ARE WORKING TO BRING FAMILIES BELOW THE POVERTY LEVEL INTO THE MAINSTREAM. FOR SOME TIME TO COME THEY WILL PROBABLY THINK OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE ONE PERSON - THE EXCEPTION TO THE RULE - WHO WAS RUDE TO THEM.

GIVEN WHAT WE ALL KNOW TO BE THE CASE - THAT FACT AND IMAGE ARE SO INEXORABLY INTERTWINED - I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THE BALANCE OF MY TIME TO SUGGEST SOME OF THE STEPS THAT CAN BE TAKEN TO REBUILD THE PUBLIC SERVICE - IN FACT AND IN IMAGE.

FIRST FOR THE FACT.

1. WE MUST REBUILD THE "FRONT LINE" OF PUBLIC SERVICE

THERE ARE THOUSANDS AND THOUSANDS OF PUBLIC SERVANTS WHOSE JOB IT IS EACH DAY TO WORK DIRECTLY WITH THE PUBLIC. THEY MUST ANSWER QUESTIONS, THEY MUST PROVIDE SERVICES, THEY MUST LISTEN TO IDEAS, AND YES, THEY MUST LISTEN TO COMPLAINTS. THESE PUBLIC SERVANTS ARE ON THE FRONT LINE. WE MUST BE FAIR, THOSE ARE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT JOBS. OFTTIMES WHEN MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC FINALLY GET IN TOUCH WITH A PUBLIC SERVANT THEY ARE AT THEIR WIT'S END, MEANING THAT THEY THEMSELVES MIGHT NOT MEET MISS MANNERS' TEST FOR POLITENESS. HOWEVER, PUBLIC SERVANTS MUST BE TRAINED TO DEAL WITH APLOMB WITH EACH AND EVERY MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC. AND THEN THE FRONT LINE PUBLIC SERVANTS MUST BE GIVEN RECOGNITION FOR JOBS WELL DONE AND SANCTIONS FOR JOBS POORLY DONE.

FRONT LINE PUBLIC SERVANTS MUST BE GIVEN JUST COMPENSATION FOR THE WORK THEY ARE REQUIRED TO DO. THEY MUST BE MADE A PART OF THE TOTAL TEAM, OR THE TEAM LOSES. IN SUMMARY, REGARDING THE FRONT LINE PUBLIC SERVANTS, OPM, THE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES MUST:

O GIVE RELEVANT TRAINING;

O MAKE IT CLEAR TO THEM AND THE ENTIRE TEAM OF

EACH UNIT THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FRONT LINE JOBS;

O GIVE RECOGNITION FOR JOBS DONE ABOVE

AND BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY; AND

O IMPOSE SANCTIONS WHEN THE FRONT LINE

PUBLIC SERVANT FALLS BELOW AN ACCEPTABLE LEVEL OF
PERFORMANCE.

NOW FOR THE REST OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE TEAM.

O OPM AND OMB MUST WORK TOGETHER TO ENSURE THAT THE
PERFORMANCE STANDARDS ARE RELATED TO THE REAL GOALS AND
OBJECTIVES OF EACH ORGANIZATIONAL UNIT. IF THE GOALS AND
OBJECTIVES DO NOT RELATE TO THE ORGANIZATION'S BUDGET, THEY ARE
NOT RELEVANT. OPM AND THE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES, THEN, MUST
ENSURE THAT THE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM HAS MEANING.

ALSO OPM AND OMB MUST WORK TOGETHER IN THE INITIATION OF
STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING THE PRODUCTIVITY OF THE FEDERAL
WORKFORCE.

O OPM MUST WORK CLOSELY WITH THE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES
AND THE NATION'S EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS TO DEVELOP TRAINING AND
EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS WHICH ARE DESIGNED TO PROVIDE THE
SKILLS NECESSARY TO SERVE THE PUBLIC WITH DISTINCTION.

O THERE MUST BE JUST COMPENSATION FOR PUBLIC SERVANTS - THE FEW WHO HAVE DECIDED TO DEVOTE THEIR TIME TO MAKE GOVERNMENT WORK FOR THE MANY.

NOW FOR THE QUESTION OF IMAGE. I WILL BE WORKING WITH THE STAFF AT OPM TO DETERMINE THE VIABILITY OF EXPANDING OR DEVELOPING THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF INITIATIVES:

O PREPARING FOR PUBLIC CONSUMPTION, EXPLANATIONS OF THE NATURE OF THE WORK CONDUCTED BY FEDERAL EMPLOYEES. IN THIS CONTEXT WE WOULD PROVIDE FOR MEDIA USE PROFILES OF THE PUBLIC SERVANTS WHO HAVE SERVED WITH DISTINCTION.

O DEVELOPING NEW CONSTITUENCIES FOR THE PUBLIC SERVICE THROUGH GREATER CONTACT BETWEEN THE "BEST AND THE BRIGHTEST" AND NATIONAL AND LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS CONCERNED ABOUT GOOD GOVERNMENT.

O PREPARING FOR USE BY SCHOOL SYSTEMS - ELEMENTARY THROUGH GRADUATE SCHOOL - DESCRIPTIONS OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT - WHAT IT DOES, HOW IT DOES ITS JOB, AND WHO DOES THE JOBS WITH DISTINCTION.

MANY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE VARIOUS ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN OPM WILL BE MEETING HERE IN WASHINGTON THIS WEEK TO DEVELOP OUR AGENCY'S

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR FISCAL YEAR 1991. MANY OF OUR PLANS FOR THE FUTURE WILL RELATE DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY TO THE CONCERNS THAT LED TO THIS HEARING. WE, AT OPM, LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH THIS SUBCOMMITTEE ON THIS IMPORTANT ISSUE.

THANK YOU. I WOULD BE PLEASED TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS THE SUBCOMMITTEE MAY HAVE.